



Mistress (after many remonstrances on unpunctuality), "REALLY, MARY, YOU MUST TRY TO BE MORE PUNCTUAL ABOUT SERVING THE MEALS. WHEN THEY ARE LATE, YOUR MASTER BLAMES ME."

Mary. "AH, WELL, MUM, OF COURSE I CAN GO, BUT YOU'RE A PRISONER FOR LIFE."

SOLICITED TESTIMONIALS.

The Tribune invites its readers to write to the Editor telling how they fared at the hands of the advertisers in *The Tribune* columns. Mr. Punch has no doubts about those who advertise in his own pages, but he has been tempted to invite the Editors of other journals to put to proof the promises made in their advertisement columns, and forward results. He suppresses names.

"I used to suffer from weak eyes. In fact I could hardly keep them open, and I could not see beyond my own nose. On seeing Dr. FLYBLISTER's advertisement in your columns I wrote for his booklet and eye ointment (price 7s. 6d.), and as a result I got my eyes opened. So strong are they now that I can even see through certain people."

"I bought a 'Fitwell' suit (made to measure, 13s. 6d.) as advertised in your paper. I was disappointed with it at

first, for it did not fit me well. You will be delighted to learn that in the second week I had it on I was caught in a shower of rain, and now it fits me like a glove."

"I used to have the most provoking habit of always blushing. Seldom could I go to parties and dances, for whenever anybody spoke to me I always blushed and was much confused. On seeing in your advertisement columns that a certain gentleman would cure blushing for a small fee, I corresponded with him, and what I learned from him convinces me that I shall never blush again."

"You will be pleased to hear that I have already made 10s. with the help of that book you advertise, *A Million Ways to Make Money*. They say a penny saved is a penny earned, and so I have earned 10s. by not buying the book."

"I used to suffer very much from consumption. My four boys were eat-

ing me out of my house and home. I bought a bottle of Dr. BANTING'S Sure Cure and mixed a little of it with the boys' food. The results have been wonderful. There is little or no consumption in my house now."

"I had a rich aunt who was of a ruddy complexion and had been ailing for a long time. I was her heir, so you can readily understand how very sorry I was to see her lying ill for such a time. Doctors had given her up years ago, and yet the poor old lady lingered and suffered. I was determined to put an end to her pain, yet I could not discover the right means to do so. Just when I was giving way to despair I saw an advertisement in your paper stating that Dr. RUMBOLT'S Porous Pills would do for Purple Patients. I immediately presented her with a box, and before that box was finished all her sorrows and pains were over. You cannot imagine how thankful I am."

A NEW PROFESSION ;

OR, WHAT TO DO WITH OUR SONS ?

My hopeless boy ! when I compare
(Claiming a father's right to do so)
Your hollow brain, your vacuous air,
With all the time, and wealth, and care
Lavished upon your mental trousseau ;

Over my waistcoat's ample pit
This ravening grief holds constant session—
That through a total lack of wit
You are deplorably unfit
To follow any known profession.

No tutelary genius shone
About your scalp in school or college ;
Therefore you cannot be a Don,
Or anything reposing on
A fundamental plinth of knowledge.

You never nursed the godlike spark
That kindles men to serve the nation ;
I trow that, as a Treasury clerk,
You never could have made your mark
Or even earned a decoration.

The medical prelim. would mar
Your hopes of making healthy men sick ;
And, as for practice at the Bar,
Your gifts—I don't know what they are,
But know, at least, they're not forensic.

You might, by steady cram, aspire
To dodge the test of martial duty ;
But you have shown no keen desire
To face the pom-pom's withering fire,
And die for HALDANE, Home and Beauty.

Remains the Church, where you might seek
A paltry income from the pew-rate ;
Yet here, again, I find you weak
In certain graces, such as Greek,
That go to make the perfect curate.

Still, there's the chauff— What's that I hear ?
You wish to say that, thanks to Heaven, you
Have found a suitable career
At some £300 a year
Drawn from a grateful country's revenue ?

My credulous son ! Your faith would break
The records of the Middle Ages !
Skilled work, and past your wits to fake,
Needs must he do who means to make
Six of the best in weekly wages !

What's that ? The House intends to treat
Its private self to public payment ?
Eventually hopes to meet,
By saving money on the Fleet,
Its bills for bed and board and raiment ?

Embrace me, boy ! I felt afraid
That you would never find your mission ;
You knew no sort of craft or trade,
But here's your *métier* ready-made !
You shall become a Politician !

My hopes for you, preposterous oaf,
Were ashes ; now to flame you fan 'em ;
No need to toil or spin or chauff
When you can comfortably loaf,
And touch £300 per annum.

Embrace your father ! You shall see
How well the prospect serves to stem his fear ;
He'll stand his son the entrance fee,
And you shall join, a paid M.P.,
The finest Club in either hemisphere. O. S.

NATURE STUDIES.

THE ELECTRIC LIGHT METER.

THERE is nothing that so much brings home to a man the responsibilities involved in the tenancy of a flat as the possession of an Electric Light Meter and the necessity for "reading" it every now and then. In the happy country district in which it is my privilege to spend a part of my time we proceed on an amiable system of mutual confidence. The producer of the light supplies me with all that I may require at a fixed sum for the year. He trusts me not to waste it in merely ostentatious illumination, and I return the compliment by hoping (often against hope) that his light will be adequate for all my nocturnal purposes. In London, however, so business-like are our methods and so rigid is our suspicion of one another, that we require a check, and thus it has come about that a meter has been fixed to the wall of the entrance passage which, in our domestic language, is somewhat boastfully described as the Hall.

Now to me, who know nothing about the internal economy of electric light, this meter is an object of mystery and terror. It is constructed mainly, I think, of metal, and possesses dials decorated with figures and made practical by hands. When I look at it my mind brings up by an irresistible association of ideas a man whose hands are black with oil, who wears a blue linen jacket, and whose conversation is of a highly technical quality to which my limitless ignorance yields an undeviating assent. I should no more dream of disputing the accuracy of his electric statements than I should question the judgment of Professor OLIVER LODGE if he told me that my kitchen was a hotbed of psychic manifestations, or should impugn the veracity of Mr. GEORGE BERNARD SHAW if he informed me that his own continued existence afforded the best and, in fact, the only proof of the argument from design.

It seems, however, that my Electric Company—I use the pronoun not so much to imply that I possess the Company, as to show that the Company owns and exercises a right to demand my occasional cheques—it seems, I say, that my Company is inspired by fairness, and that its dealings with me are to be based on the strictest rectitude. It has recently furnished me with a card of printed instructions entitled "How to Read the Meter," and for some time past I have been laboriously occupied in endeavouring to master this new knowledge. "The Meter," I am told, "is read in the same way as a gas meter, the right-hand dial showing units, the second tens, the third hundreds, and so on." This statement is, no doubt, clear and illuminating (as all Electric Light statements ought to be), and I am quite prepared to admit that the language is plain almost to baldness. For me, however, it is useless, for I suffer from an incurable preliminary defect : I do not know how to read a Gas Meter.

Then follows a phrase which in its intensity is dramatic : "The figure to be taken is the one that the hand has last passed which will be the lowest numerically of those it is between." I merely pause here to suggest that "lower" would be more correct grammatically, and then I dash on breathlessly to learn that "there is no difficulty about this when the hand is clearly between two figures, but when it is over or nearly over a figure it is sometimes doubtful whether the figure has been passed or not." How true that is ! Life is like that, and death, and all the other things that happen to ordinary men and women in their passage through this vale—but it appears to my obscure intelligence to have no special or direct application to Electric Light. After this



THE NEW CHAUFFEUR.

MRS. BRITANNIA. "NEARLY READY, HALDANE?"

VOICE FROM UNDERNEATH THE CAR. "ALL IN GOOD TIME, MUM. THISH 'ERE CAR TAKES A LOT O' THINKIN' OVER!"

["I am convinced that if I do anything in a hurry, I shall do it badly."—From Mr. Haldane's Speech in the House, Thursday, March 8.]



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Sentimental Youth (to partner, shaken by a passing tremor). "Oh, I HOPE YOU DON'T FEEL COLD?"

She. "NOT AT ALL, THANKS. ONLY 'THE GREY GOOSE WALKING OVER MY GRAVE.'"

Sentimental Youth (with effusion). "HAPPY GOOSE!"

I became involved in a maze. I failed entirely "to obtain the number of units used," for the diagrams and numerals had on my brain the numbing effect produced by illustrations of figure-skating. It was no comfort to learn that "representatives of the Corporation are supplied either with business cards or badges," and, finally, when I went out to inspect the actual Meter I realised that it had been fixed to the wall at an altitude of ten feet, and that without a step ladder (which I do not possess) it would be useless for me to endeavour to read it at all.

"MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD."

THE case of the young man called CRAZE, who recently fled from his cottage at Abertridwr because he heard raps on the wall, and is "completely broken down by his experiences" and refuses to go near the cottage again—is not so rare as some people seem to think.

JONES TERTIUS, happening, one day last week, to stand for a few moments in the passage outside the door of the Head's study, on the other side of which TOMPKINS minor was engaged in a discussion with the Doctor on the propriety of appearing in afternoon school wearing an imitation high collar manufactured out of cardboard, heard a succession of resounding raps. In a subsequent conversation TOMPKINS minor (who appeared broken by his experiences) said he hoped he might never visit the room again.

When rendering "*Dear heart, I only love thee*" to a party

of friends at her semi-detached villa in the Brixton Road, Miss ELIZABETH SPINKS was interrupted by loud raps on the division wall, and in consequence completely broke down at the eighth bar ("Oh, could I gently whisper"). Miss SPINKS has since removed to Balham, and she refuses to go near her former residence.

When fulfilling a Bridge engagement a few nights ago, a gentleman of moderate means, during the course of the game, heard mysterious raps, apparently coming from beneath the table, and slightly anterior to his opponent's declaration. The gentleman came away completely broke by his experiences. He refuses to go near the house now.

What we are coming to.

FROM a Weekly Parliamentary Report in the near future: "Last Monday Mr. BROWN, the new Member for Blankborough, took the oath, his seat, and the first quarter in advance. He has not been seen since."

Asking an Impossibility.

WANTED, party to take forty gallons milk, more or less, twice daily.—*Scotsman*.

AN American paper ascribes to Mr. J. M. BARRIE the complaint that it is the English actor's desire to "get everything possible out of a line—to squeeze it dry." Our complaint is (not, of course, of Mr. BARRIE's own plays) that most lines require so little squeezing.

LIFE'S LITTLE DIFFICULTIES.

THE APPOINTMENT.

I.

Mr. Adrian Spilling, of the Education Office, to Miss Meta Bland.

(By hand. "Wait reply.")

MY DEAR GIRL,—What has happened? I waited for you from five minutes to three until twenty past four, when I had to go in order to show up in Whitehall for a little while. Where can you have been? It is not as if I had so much time to spare that it can be frittered away like this. Surely I wrote clearly enough—"Under the clock, Victoria, at three." I distinctly remember writing these words. Please let me have a line at any rate to say you are all right. Yours always, A.

II.

Miss Meta Bland to Mr. Adrian Spilling.

(By hand. "Wait reply.")

MY DEAR ADRIAN,—Do send me a word to say you are well, and that it was only some horrid office business that kept you. I am so nervous about you. I waited as you told me under the clock at Victoria, from five minutes past three (I could not possibly get there before) until four, and then I gave it up and went to Mrs. LEGGE's to tea, as I was compelled to do. Unless you had come and gone before I got there, I cannot have missed you, for I watched everybody that entered the station. These broken appointments are terribly wearing. I am tired out this evening, and quite unfit to dine at the SERGISOONS, where they always talk about VELASQUEZ and show you sprigs of the true poet's laurel. Ever yours, M.

III.

Miss Meta Bland to Mr. Adrian Spilling.

(By hand. Answer to No. 1.)

DEAR ADRIAN,—I haven't the slightest idea what your letter means. I repeat that I waited under the clock at Victoria from five minutes past three until four. If you also were there you were invisible. I am relieved to find you are all right.

Yours, M.

IV.

Mr. Adrian Spilling to Miss Meta Bland.

(By hand. Answer to No. 2.)

DEAR META,—It is inexplicable to me. I was certainly there, and as certainly you were not; and another afternoon has been lost. These things I simply cannot view with composure. Life is too short. I will let you know about Thursday as soon as I can, but my Chief seems to be inclined to resent my long absence to-day, and I shall have to be a little careful. Yours, A.

P.S.—It has just occurred to me that you may have been waiting at the London and Brighton part of the station. That, of course, would explain it, although how you could imagine me to mean that I cannot think.

V.

Miss Meta Bland to Mr. Adrian Spilling.

DEAR ADRIAN,—I have only just learned that there are two stations at Victoria. Considering how often I have been to Brighton lately, you surely might have been more explicit and said quite plainly that it was the other that you meant. It is all very foolish and disappointing. I should like to forget it.

Yours, M.

VI.

Mr. Adrian Spilling to Miss Meta Bland.

DEAR META,—I should like to forget it too; but what you say simply bowls me out. I always looked upon you as one of the few women who have any intelligence. How you can say you did not know there was another Victoria passes my knowledge, when it was from there that we went on that awful visit to your aunt at Faversham. However, I shall know better next time. Yours, A.

VII.

Miss Meta Bland to Mr. Adrian Spilling.

DEAR ADRIAN,—I thought we went to Faversham from Charing Cross; but anyway I don't see why you are so bitter about poor Aunt ADELAIDE. I am sure she was very kind to you, and even let you smoke in the house, which no one was ever allowed to do before. It seems to me that since you knew all about there being two Victoria Stations you might have walked over to the other one to see if I was there.

Yours, M.

VIII.

Mr. Adrian Spilling to Miss Meta Bland.

DEAR META,—I don't understand you at all about your Aunt. All the time we were there you were scheming to be out of doors, and I still remember your sigh of relief when the train started on the Monday morning; but now you take a directly opposite view. I suppose women are like this. As to coming over to the Brighton side to see if you were there, I never dreamed you could be so foolish as to make the mistake, and besides, if I had left my post I might have missed you. But do let us drop this wretched subject.

I am very sorry to say that I can't possibly take you to hear HEGEDÜS on Friday as we had planned. My Chief has asked me to dinner, and it amounts to a command. But I could come afterwards and take you home.

Yours, A.

IX.

Miss Meta Bland to Mr. Adrian Spilling.

DEAR ADRIAN,—It doesn't in the least matter about HEGEDÜS, as Mr. CUMNOR-HALL, who was here this evening when your note came, is going to take us. Please don't trouble to leave your party in order to fetch me home, as Mr. CUMNOR-HALL has asked us to have supper afterwards. He is always so generous about things like that.

Yours, M.

X.

Mr. Adrian Spilling to Miss Meta Bland.

DEAR META,—Of course you must do as you wish about CUMNOR-HALL. I shall certainly not come to fetch you, as he is not the kind of man that I care about. Your sneer about my want of generosity is the cruellest thing I ever remember any one saying to me. When one has only £300 a year in a Government office and a very small private income, supper parties at the Savoy are not easy things. If you want luxuries like that it is a pity you ever made me love you.

Yours, A.

XI.

Miss Meta Bland to Mr. Adrian Spilling.

DEAR ADRIAN,—You are most unkind and unfair. You know I did not mean to suggest that you were ungenerous. I think of you as the most generous man I know. And you ought to know that the last thing I should ever do would be to sneer at you. I don't sneer at any one, least of all at you. But that horrid Victoria Station affair seems to have made us both ready to misunderstand each other. Do let us have all Saturday afternoon somewhere and forget this stupid bad-tempered week.

Ever yours, M.

XII.

Mr. Adrian Spilling to Miss Meta Bland.

(By hand.)

MY DARLING META,—We will go to Kew on Saturday afternoon. I will come for you at half-past two. I hope you will think this little piece of enamel rather sweet. I do.

Yours always, A.

The Yorkshire Post, in announcing a musical competition in Hull, says: "The judges are Minor Canon DAMS, of Carlisle Cathedral, who has already had experience of this kind of work, and Mr. BERNARD JOHNSON . . . whose ready wit may be trusted to supply the place of experience." Dare we imagine the following dialogue?—

Canon Dams (with faint praise). We have—ah—heard worse performances.
Mr. Johnson (readily). And better.

CHARIVARIA.

OWING to the defection of the Labour Members last week, the Government found themselves in a tight corner. They escaped, but only by the narrowest of majorities—204, in fact, all told.

The Old Age Pensions Bill which has been introduced into the House provides that conviction for an offence involving penal servitude shall be followed by forfeiture of the pension. We need scarcely say that pressure will be brought to bear on Members whose constituencies include an influential Hooligan element to secure the removal of this obnoxious restriction.

It is rumoured that the latest proposal in regard to the policing of Morocco is that the London County Council shall undertake the work.

The engagement of the King of SPAIN and Princess ENA of Battenberg is announced. This is a distinct *coup* for our newspapers, which for some time past have been referring to the probability of such a match.

Some admirers presented SACCO, on the completion of his fast, with a diamond monkey. The curio is said to have been picked up at a recent Freak Dinner of Kimberley merchants.

By the way, "Ignoramus" writes to ask us whether a Freak Dinner is a Dinner given by Freaks to Freaks. "Ignoramus" knows more than his name implies.

The Rivers Committee are proposing to abolish return tickets on the L.C.C. boats. This seems a mistaken policy. Lots of the return-halves must have been deliberately sacrificed.

Police-Constable ROBERT LOVELL, who has just retired, took 142,976 dogs to the Battersea Home, but not all on one string.

"The Ski Club of Great Britain" has come into existence, and a lady of the old school writes to us expressing surprise that there should be a sufficient number of aeronauts in our island to warrant the formation of such a society. We have explained to her that the word is pronounced *She*; and our correspondent now writes to protest against the New Woman and all her clubs.

A New Zealand gentleman who is making a tour of the world on foot has, according to *The Daily Chronicle*, met with marvellous adventures. He was arrested in Russia and Turkey as a spy,



G. L. S. 1906

Near-sighted Old Gentleman (throwing penny to what he takes to be a pavement artist). "THERE! I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU'VE DONE 'EM YOURSELF; BUT IT MUST BE DOOSID COLD SITTING THERE!"

"and elsewhere has been fired at and attacked by wolves and bears."

Pessimists should note, for all they may say about the degeneracy of our age, that the idea of giving compensation where it is a moral but not a legal obligation is making steady headway. The number of periodicals of the lighter sort which offer prizes—and even pensions—to their readers is constantly increasing.

MISCHA ELMAN has declared to an interviewer that he loves everything English, and wants to become an Englishman. He also wishes that his father would talk English, and it is not impossible that the youngster may send him to a night-school.

A fillip has been given by the new French President to a national sport. He is said to have remitted the fines imposed

on 592 pedestrians for being knocked down by cabmen in the streets of Paris.

It is suggested that, as a means of raising the funds required for the payment of Members of the House of Commons, a new class of Paying Peers shall be instituted. There should be no difficulty about this.

The statement that flowers will shortly be exhibited for sale on the platforms of the electrified District Railway, the atmosphere of which is now so much improved, compels one, in fairness to the Central London Railway, to mention that Twopenny Tuber Roses have been a popular article of commerce for many years past.

The Police cannot of course be ubiquitous, but we are sorry to read that, on the opening day of the Aldwych and Islington Tramway, £71 was taken.

THE YELLOW PATRIOTS.

(A Fragment from some Future Historian.)

.... It may well seem incredible nowadays that the Governments of these three Great Powers should suddenly find themselves on the brink of a war which none of them had ever regarded as desirable, or even possible. Yet such was the fact.

They had been carrying on protracted negotiations, in which, as usual, one side had been pressing for more than it expected to obtain, while the other refused much that it was prepared eventually to concede. But the points at issue were not considered by the two parties chiefly concerned as at all worth fighting about, while our own country was only indirectly interested in the dispute.

In those days, however, each of the three countries possessed an institution known, for some reason that cannot now be stated with any confidence, as the "Yellow Press." This was conducted by a small but influential section of journalists, to whose prescient sagacity it had been evident from the first that war was absolutely inevitable. Their patriotism was beyond all question, though it would seem to have restricted itself to the welfare of the particular journal to which they happened to have attached themselves. Thus they held it lawful and indeed praiseworthy to announce, in the gigantic "headlines" which commended themselves to the somewhat crude taste of that period, the most alarming discoveries of infamous designs of this or that foreign potentate against the Peace of Europe. That such exposures were based on the most insufficient evidence and might have dangerous consequences was considered immaterial, provided that they increased the prestige and circulation of the paper that published them—which, however incomprehensible it may appear to a modern mind, was undoubtedly their effect.

It is always difficult to induce any people to concern itself seriously about foreign politics, and for some time any such efforts produced nothing but a languid and temporary sensation. Popular attention in England just then was mainly absorbed by the more engrossing topic of "Cup ties" (a national diversion or sport of which no precise description has come down to us)—while on the Continent the feeling was so far from bellicose that in both countries there was a growing reaction against the burden of military service.

Consequently, before each nation could be inspired with the martial impulse, it was necessary to convince its population that they were in actual and imminent peril of attack. Excellent work in this direction was done by the enterprise of the Yellow Press in publishing reports of "Secret Understandings," "Ominous Speeches" by Great Personages, and "Plans of Invasion,"—all of which, it is true, were contradicted as soon as the paper had made what was termed a "scoop."

But the citizens in three Capitals became gradually imbued with the impression that War was bound to come, and that, on the whole, it could not come at a better time, since their Yellow Press assured them that their own particular country was in such a state of preparation as to be practically certain of victory.

The average citizen, too, was deeply incensed by the offensive gibes directed against his own nation by the journalists of a rival country. These attacks, being written in a foreign tongue and generally appearing in obscure periodicals, might have escaped his notice altogether, but for the vigilance of the Yellow foreign correspondents, who forwarded faithful translations at once—simply to illustrate "the trend of opinion."

Notwithstanding all this, the negotiations muddled along quite uneventfully, until the Yellow Press was actually suspected of being "unduly alarmist,"—which hurt both its feelings and its circulation.

And at length something happened. Possibly there was a slight hitch in the diplomatic proceedings—at all events a keen-eyed correspondent observed that a certain statesman, as he left the council, wore an anxious expression and his hat at a more acute angle of inclination—which portentous intelligence was cabled home at once.

Whereupon the Yellow Press drew the obvious inference, in enormous letters (of the size generally reserved for a "Society Scandal"), of "Impossible Demands," "Hopeless Impasse," and "Grave Crisis"—and made another scoop.

This was followed up by flamboyant articles on "Foreign Aggression," "Insular Insolence," and "The National Dignity," with suggestions that any Government which showed so little sense of its responsibilities as tamely to submit to such treatment must be composed of traitors who deserved instant impeachment. It was also reported (incorrectly, as afterwards appeared) that the other nation was rapidly mobilising its forces.

By this time the people in each country had realised the fact that they were in for a big war, and that, as their Yellow Press exhorted them, it was their duty, as patriots, to insist that their own Government should strike the first blow.

So the Man in the Street demonstrated, and sang national anthems, and waved inexpensive flags, and cheered outside the office of his favourite newspaper—without more than the very vaguest notion of what he wanted to go to war about.

In fact the excitement reached such a pitch that the three Governments, each fearing that they would not be able to resist popular pressure much longer, sent their Ambassadors frequent and urgent despatches, which, being in cipher, were interpreted by the Yellow Press as containing "Ultimatum," "Time Limit Fixed," or "Recall of Our Ambassador,"—with an intelligent anticipation quite remarkable in the circumstances.

Then came a day when the patriotic proprietors and staffs of the Yellow Press of each capital had the gratification of being summoned to a private audience by their respective Premiers.

What took place at these interviews is still largely a matter for historical conjecture—but there seems reason to believe that our own Prime Minister, at all events, began by informing his hearers that the Powers reluctantly recognised that, unless the present highly inflamed state of international feeling subsided within the next twenty-four hours, they would have no alternative but to resort to the arbitrament of the sword. Which the representatives of the Yellow Press, aware of the extreme unlikelihood of any such subsidence, and the colossal "boom" that a war was certain to effect in their circulations, received with decorous expressions of concern and regret. The Prime Minister, after pointing out that a campaign on so gigantic a scale and of such protracted duration as was to be apprehended could hardly fail to prove almost as disastrous to the victors as to the vanquished, mentioned that the three Powers had agreed upon a plan which would reduce the carnage to a minimum, and might, he trusted, meet with the present company's approval.

It had been decided that, in the lamentable event of war, the belligerent forces should be composed entirely of those patriotic and high-spirited pressmen in each country who felt so keenly that the national honour could be vindicated only by blood—in short, of such gentlemen as he now had the honour of addressing. He added that, although the conditions of the conflict were still under discussion, he thought he might promise that they should have the advantage of being equipped with the new short rifle, and as many of the latest pattern of quick-firing guns as they might require.

Then he remarked that the eye of England would be upon them, and that he wished them luck—after which they withdrew.

Now they were none of them wanting in either moral or



WORKING OUT THEIR OWN SALIVATION.

THIS IS NOT A FEAST OF "FUNERAL BAKED MEATS." IT IS A PARTY OF HYGIENIC ENTHUSIASTS, FOLLOWING THE SYSTEM BY WHICH ALL FOOD IS MASTICATED EIGHTY-FIVE TIMES AND THEN ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN THE MOUTH TILL IT DISAPPEARS BY INVOLUNTARY ABSORPTION.

physical courage. They had faced unflinchingly the prospect of their country plunging into a desperate and appalling struggle. They were sternly resolved to see it through to the bitter end—but they had not calculated upon seeing it through anything but their office windows. For few of them had had any regular military training, while several were getting on in years. Moreover, although they entertained the highest respect for one another as smart journalists or up-to-date proprietors, each had his private doubts whether the others were precisely the kind of men who would stand more than a merely sporting chance in modern warfare. But, if they felt that a greater responsibility had been put upon them than they should justly have been called upon to undertake, it never for a moment occurred to them to shirk it. They were quite prepared to turn out and do their best—as soon as the necessity should arise.

And, although we have no positive evidence to that effect, it may be safely assumed that both their French *confrères*, to whom a duel was of course an ordinary professional incident, and the elderly and spectacled fire-eaters of the German Yellow Press exhibited at least equal ardour and determination, and that the call to arms would have found them no less ready—had it come.

But, by a merciful and wholly unexpected interposition of Providence, that call never did come. That very evening the welcome tidings was flashed to each capital that "the tension was relaxed," and that the situation showed "marked symptoms of improvement." It was found that the report that an ultimatum had been issued was exaggerated, and that there was no foundation for the statement that any Ambassador had been recalled—indeed, the crisis might be considered as already at an end.

Thus, at the eleventh hour, to quote from eloquent Yellow leading articles of the period, "the gates of the Temple of Janus opened once more" ('closed' would have been the more

correct expression, but the meaning was obvious) "and the horizon of three great nations was no longer overcast by the sinister shadow of the goddess Bellona." The writers added that, "considering how essential it was in the interests of European Commerce and Civilisation to avoid anything that might lead to international friction, they could not too strongly deplore and condemn the miserable policy of 'nagging' and 'pinpricking' pursued by a certain class of foreign journalists—a policy which—but for the calm good-sense and moderation displayed by the entire Press of their own beloved country—might easily have produced consequences which they could not contemplate, even then, without a shudder!"

F. A.

Parliamentary Intelligence.

SCOTCH and Welsh M.P.'s who have in the past complained much of the flatness of their London surroundings as compared with their own mountainous districts, are rejoiced that Arthur's Seat has been moved to the City and that Snowden is to be found at Westminster.

The Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool desires it to be known that he is in favour of the Tay-Payment of Members.

"COMFORTABLE board, near sea.—Apply, &c."—*The Schoolmaster.*

'Useful' would seem a better adjective. For ourselves, though, we have always felt that the whole romance of being Crusced would be the fortuitous lighting upon a plank or two with which to build the raft.

LAST week in Bouverie Street we heard a rather loud tie proudly described as "*le dernier cri*." If we hear it again we shall have to warn its proprietor that its next cry will indeed be its last.



Ida (very keen). "I SAY! AREN'T YOU FOLLOWING? YOU ARE A SLACKER! WHAT'S THE EXCUSE THIS TIME?"
Ethel (otherwise). "WELL, DEAR, IT'S LEST—SO I'M GIVING UP BEAGLING!"

A SUDDEN SPRING.

(With acknowledgments to the Special Correspondents of our Contemporaries.)

HAMMERSMITH.—A combination of meteorological circumstances, together with the establishment of a formidable anticyclone over France, has quite transformed the Broadway. I took record of the first ten men I met; three had discarded overcoats, four were carrying them over their arms, and the other three were soldiers. A curious result of the fine weather is the absence of puddles in the roadways.

PURSEY.—The Atlantic disturbance which had threatened our islands has sheered off to the north, and it is no doubt to this happy circumstance that Putney to-day owes its share of the 500,000 square miles of sunshine which we are at present enjoying. The neighbouring parish of Fulham is, I understand, equally infected with the glorious

weather conditions. I took stock of the first ten women I met; seven of these were without furs, one wore a feather boa, and two clung to squirrels. I think I saw a cuckoo, but it had passed round the corner before I could verify my observation. However, I certainly saw one man wearing a strawberry in his button-hole; you may take this as official.

PADDINGTON.—The day opened here with a cloudless sky. Expressions such as, "Isn't it a lovely day?" "Pity to be indoors on such a morning," and, "My! ain't it 'ot!" were heard on all sides. Many people living near the Parks woke to the twittering of the lark, and breakfasted to the liquid flute-like tones of the blackbird or thrush.

I understand that a gentleman was seen in Kensington talking to a pedestrian with a pith helmet. I personally took note of the first ten men I met; three had shed their chest-protectors, two wore cummerbunds, and five were down with sun-stroke.

How happy could I be with both.

We gather from *The Birmingham Daily Post* that the Headmaster of the Holywell County School is strongly of opinion that the daffodil, and not the leek, should be the Welsh national emblem, and he asks, "Since both are called 'cenin' in Welsh, why not wear the prettier and the more odoriferous?"

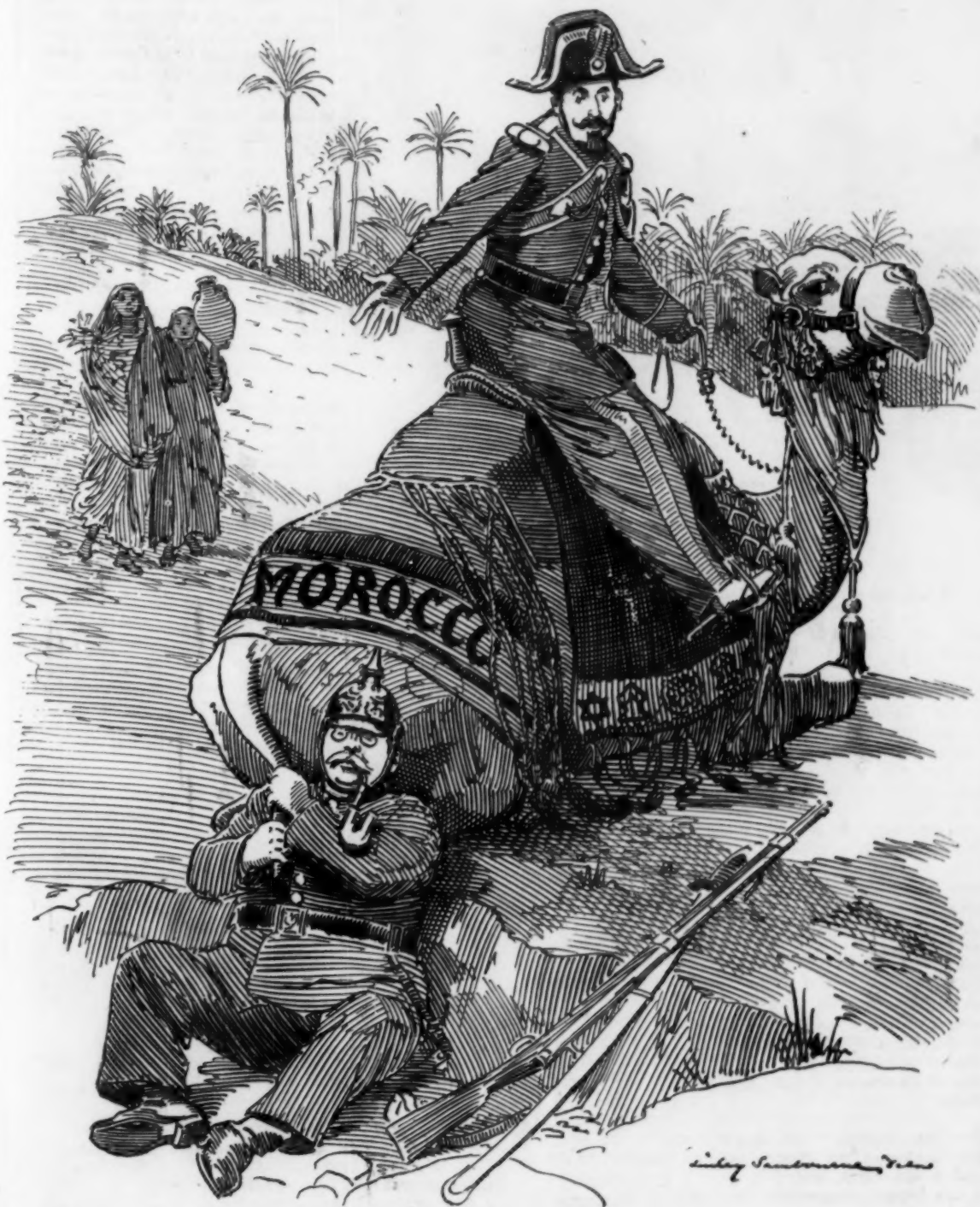
This means wearing both daffodil and leek, and is perhaps the best way out of the difficulty (since both are called "cenin").

More Professional Candour.

"FRENCH Master requires French Lessons."
Bath Herald.

"WATCH DOG (Cross Russian Retriever), strayed on the 18th February, if found in any person's possession after three days will be prosecuted."—*Scotsman.*

But would not this make the poor dog even more cross?



SITTING TIGHT.

FRENCH GENDARME. "J'Y SUIS!"

GERMAN GENDARME. "J'Y RESTE!"

THE [illegible] OF [illegible]

[The main body of the page contains several paragraphs of text that are extremely faded and illegible. The text appears to be arranged in a standard paragraph format, but the characters are too light to transcribe accurately.]

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TONY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday, Mar. 5.—C.B. back after week's absence through illness. Returns to find other seats of the mighty vacant for similar reason. PRINCE ARTHUR still tarries on his way from the triumphant poll. DON JOSÉ also on sick list. Epidemic spread to Lords, where the Leader has not been seen for fully a week. Not unnatural feeling of depression prevalent. Ordered arrangements of business tumbled about. Were to have had field night on Fiscal Question, specially arranged for benefit of PRINCE ARTHUR and DON JOSÉ. C.B., always thinking of others, felt certain they would welcome opportunity of saying something definite as to their personal position in altered circumstances of the day at Westminster. Accordingly, primed KITSON with resolution affirming sacredness of Free Trade principles and challenging contradiction.

Nothing new in this procedure. Familiar to *Bombastes Furioso* when Utopia was still numbered among the kingdoms of the earth. Impossible to conceive two persons more remote in identity than the General commanding *Artaxaminous's* troops and Member for Colne Valley. Yet KITSON's resolution standing on Order paper is but a prose rendering of the distich *Bombastes* hung with his boots on a tree:

Who dares this pair of boots displace
Must meet *Bombastes* face to face.

Days gone by when, equally pertinacious Liberals insisting on submitting analogous resolutions, PRINCE ARTHUR and his men-at-arms filed forth from the lists. By accident result nevertheless



"CLEAR THINKING."
(Rt. Hon. R. B. H.-Id.-ne.)



"Who dares this pair of boots displace
Must meet JAMES KITSON face to face."

(The Member for Colne Valley.)

the same. Neither PRINCE ARTHUR nor DON JOSÉ would be present if original plan carried out and Free Trade Resolution submitted on Thursday. C.B. having arranged the little performance for special benefit of the two right hon. gentlemen, it would be foolish to proceed with it in their absence. Accordingly, motion to-night indefinitely deferred.

Meanwhile sympathy of House centred upon KITSON. Having, in obedience to original programme, hung his boots on the tree, he walks round it in his stocking feet, cursing the fate that brought a naturally peaceful Baronet into such a fray.

Business done.—Civil Service Estimates.

Tuesday night.—Odd how from time to time chance turn of debate makes startling disclosure of the character of men with whom we have thought ourselves long familiar. Here's BALCARRES, for example, been in House these ten years. As Hon. Sec. of Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings appropriately, during declining years of late Ministry, buttressed it as Junior Lord of the Treasury. Threw himself with energy of middle-aged youth into performance of fascinating duties of Whip. In short, has buzzed about pretty prominently. Yet only this afternoon did the House catch glimpse beneath a studiously placid demeanour of the volcano of a passionate nature, instantly

responsive to cry for help for the weaker side.

It was ACLAND-HOOD who inadvertently but directly led up to disclosure. It appears that SYDNEY BUXTON been trying to do something iniquitous in matter of nomination of Post Office Committee. A long involved story, occupying in development freshest two hours of the sitting. In brief it came to this, that, early negotiations for nomination of Committee breaking down, the POSTMASTER-GENERAL placed on paper a motion leaving its nomination to Committee of Selection.

That on face of it eminently impartial arrangement; but perfidy lurks behind its simplicity. The PINK 'UN told how, happening to be hovering about the Bar, he "spied" SYDNEY BUXTON handing to the Clerk of the Table half a sheet of notepaper. Naturally suspicious, he made his way to the Table, asked what the document contained, "and," he cried, holding out the Orders of the Day and shaking them in the face of the quivering POSTMASTER-GENERAL, "it was this,"—indicating the amendment aforesaid.

This dramatic interposition of his ordinarily impassive Chief moved BALCARRES. In addition he had a personal grievance that evidently seared a haughty spirit.

"We Whips," he said, "are commonly alluded to as the ordinary channels of communication."

No one who had yet spoken had made the allusion. Evidently somewhere at some time it had cropped up, causing effusion of bad blood. More than once in the course of his speech BALCARRES, with increasing bitterness, repeated the phrase. If they had called him an equator it might have been meant disrespectfully but would not have mattered. "A channel of communication," and an ordinary channel at that, was more than trained patience could stand.

In a fine passage, glowing with scorn, BALCARRES, having crumpled up SYDNEY BUXTON, turned on unoffending C.-B. who had ventured to offer a few remarks, and with threatening forefinger, reminiscent of *Lochiel's* interlocutor on the eve of Culloden, bade him beware of the day when the Lowlands should meet him in battle array.

"We," he proudly said, "can be voted down. But the findings of your Committee will be discredited in advance."

Here the channel of communication abruptly dried up, and the House, grateful for relief from terrible tension, hurried forth to the Division Lobby.

Business done.—Storm in a teacup. Objection taken to POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S procedure in getting Select Committee appointed. C.-B., having scored a majority of 204, gracefully yields to wishes of minority, and peace reigns at Westminster.

Friday night.—The Aliens Act come home to roost. Has dealt decided back-hander at Parliamentary week-ending. Hon. Members seem to be especial objects of suspicion on part of agents administering it. Attention is not even confined to sitting Members. CAPTAIN TOMMY BOWLES, attempting to land after enjoying a breath of that briny which old associations make indispensable to the pleasure of life, was stopped at the gangway and asked if he were the possessor of £5 in lawful cash. The CAPTAIN, his vocabulary not exhausted even after an electoral campaign in the City, made suitable reply.

SIR JOSEPH LEESE, taking up the curdling story, recently made the House's flesh creep by narrative of his personal experiences. Coming home from brief visit to Continent, his eyes brightened by gleam of cliffs at Dover, his patriotic breast inflated with English air blowing off the Downs, he was stopped by what he described as "a little gentleman in French uniform," who inquired whether he was an Englishman.

An artist, desirous of varying the traditional type of John Bull, might do worse than present a portrait of the Recorder of Manchester. For a moment startled by the question, he gazed speechless over the head of his interlocutor. Then he let him have it straight.



SO LIKE A DESTITUTE ALIEN.

"Am I an Englishman?!!!!"—Who the— what the— why the—!!!!—Never w's so 'nsulted 'n m' life!!!!"

(Sir J-s-ph L-se.)

Shortly after, the shrivelled remains of "the little gentleman" being decently removed, another hapless man, this time



COACHING THE MINISTERIAL BOAT.

"It's a clinking good crew and amazingly well together."

(Mr. R. C. L-hm-nn.)

in ship's uniform, came up and asked, "Are you a British subject?" [Curtain.

In their zeal for administering the Act these inquiring gentlemen are no respecters of persons. Except EVANS-GORDON, no Member of last Parliament worked harder to pass Aliens Bill than HOWARD VINCENT; and he too, coming home after taking his walks abroad in Boulogne, found himself suspect. Unlike JOSEPH LEESE who, perhaps not saying exactly what he meant, protested it was "degrading to be asked if he were an Englishman," HOWARD VINCENT gloried in the misunderstanding. There is in truth something in his martial figure, his piercing eye, his war-worn moustache, that suggests the foreign Field-Marshal. Had he been privileged, as on historic occasion ST. JOHN BRODRICK was, to wear military uniform in the company of the KAISER and his Colonels, he would have seemed so much at home that no bystander would have suspected he came from Sheffield.

In the misunderstanding on board the packet-boat he discerned fresh testimony to distinction of looks and manner. He regretted that the learned Recorder of Manchester, returning to his native land, should have been, even for a moment, regarded as an undesirable Alien. For himself, he had no complaint to make.

That all very well in a particular case. But the annoyance indicated in other instances is a serious blot on the pleasure of week-ending. "Moreover than which," one result of the passing of the Act has been the abolition of third-class return tickets to the Continent. This, coming on top of refusal of the POSTMASTER-GENERAL to reintroduce franking, and the dwindling quantity of the shilling dinner provided by the Kitchen Committee, is calculated to make some younger sons in Opposition Camp reconsider their position.

Business done.—Talk about Agricultural Compensation.

A Cruel Blow.

LADY BLEW THE WHISTLE.

THREE POLICEMEN INJURED.

Daily News Headlines.

A Chance for Black-listers.

"LAPPER (Experienced) Wanted."

Birmingham Daily Mail.

THE whole world, according to *The Daily Express*, is going mauve mad. Another fashion authority, however, insists that not mauve but something nearer pink is the correct spring shade, and doubtless the world will now go rosee madder.



Master (to fair American, who has just ridden into the middle of the pack). "DOES NOT YOUR HORSE KICK HOUNDS?"
Fair American. "THAT'S SO. I BEGON YOU'LL WANT TO MOVE 'EM AWAY!"



"WHAT AN OLD BROWN IS!"

"Oh, I DON'T KNOW. HE'S GOT FAR MORE BRAINS THAN APPEAR ON THE SURFACE."

ARE JEWELS MALIGNANT?

[In a lecture delivered at the Westminster Palace Hotel on "Occultism in Jewels" Madame CAVALIER, an Indian lady, said that jewels were not mere lifeless lumps of crystal, but possessed a soul and sex, and were capable of influencing those who wore them.]

MR. F. TOBIAS CRACKIT writes from Dartmoor, as follows:—

May I be permitted cordially to endorse Madame CAVALIER's observations regarding the malign influence exerted by some gems upon their wearers? I can testify to the truth of her statements from personal experience. A combination of amethysts and pearls, says Madame CAVALIER, is very dangerous. It is. I once had an amethyst and pearl scarf-pin and was fool enough to wear it. I say "fool" because I knew it would be simply tempting fortune to venture out in that amethyst and pearl pin. But vanity overcame my better judgment.

It looked really rather nice, and gave to my appearance just that finish which marks the perfectly dressed man.

I was thinking of returning home when I was accosted, in a grossly insult-

ing manner, by a total stranger, who claimed my scarf-pin as his property and intimated that I had acquired it by dishonest means. I was unable to convince him or the policeman he summoned that the pin was an heirloom, descended to me from my mother's side of the family, and the experience was altogether most unpleasant. It took me quite a long time to work off the disagreeable effects of this monstrous accusation.

On several other occasions I have suffered cruel misfortune from causes which could only be attributable to the diabolical malevolence of some jewel which happened to be upon my person, and for the present, at any rate, upon the recommendation of a member of the Judicial Bench, to whom, not without some reluctance, for I have a horror of ignorant superstition, I confided my trouble, I have abandoned the wearing of precious stones altogether.

I have long been a believer in the theory put forward by Madame CAVALIER that certain stones have sex and are capable of propagating their own kind. I have several diamonds interred in my back garden, but to achieve results from

which reliable data could be obtained more stones are required than I possess. If any of your readers are interested in this truly fascinating branch of mystic science I shall be happy to include a few large and flawless gems (sex immaterial) in the experiments upon which I hope to engage, when I have completed the geological observations at present demanding my whole attention.

Salaries for Members.

A DIFFICULTY has arisen in regard to the proposed payment of Members. It has been pointed out by a student of the speeches of Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE and others on Education, that, where grants are made from public moneys, the Government must and shall exercise control over the expenditure of such grants. This reminder has created a very painful impression.

A Holocaust of Olympians.

"DURING the shooting in the Gwalior State the Prince of WALES bagged nine tigers and three pantheons."

Western Mail, Cardiff.

MUSICAL GOSSIP.

THE *début* of MARKO KARAMELOFF, the Bulgarian conductor, with his orchestra of seventy-five trained instrumentalists, attracted a large and fashionable audience to the Euterpe Concert Hall last Saturday night. In directing the performance without a *bâton* M. KARAMELOFF resembles other notable conductors of the day; what honourably distinguishes him from his talented *confrères* is that he has achieved such a complete control over his men that they are able to dispense with instruments altogether. The results achieved inevitably fall somewhat short in actual sonority of those with which ordinary concert-goers are familiar, but so convincing is the pantomime of the performers that, with the aid of a full analytical programme, the intelligent amateur finds no difficulty in following every bar of the music.

M. KARAMELOFF's gestures, moreover, are extraordinarily suggestive in their picturesque intensity. Thus to indicate a *pianissimo* he crouches down on all fours; when a passage in contrary motion occurs he stands on his head; and at a *sforzando* his whole frame undergoes a convulsion which leaves nothing to be desired. The programme of the first concert included the *Kaisermarsch*, the overture to *Rienzi*, the *Walkürenritt*, and STRAUSS's *Heldenleben*, and by the unanimous testimony of those present a more picturesque and gymnastic rendering of these masterpieces was never given in London. One great advantage of the method of inaudible performance is so patent as hardly to deserve mention. It is that no constraint is put upon the exercise of the conversational instinct amongst the audience, and on Saturday night the uninterrupted ripple of talk in the auditorium formed a most charming *obligato* accompaniment to the spirited contortions of the instrumentalists.

It remains to be added that M. KARAMELOFF and his band are fully alive to the great additional attraction lent to music by the dress and bearing of its executants. M. KARAMELOFF, who is a man of colossal build, and endowed with

a magnificent *chevelure* of terra cotta hue, wears a long black velvet frock-coat, violet accordion-pleated pantaloons and a Purple Emperor butterfly tie of gigantic dimensions. The wood wind, by a happy device, are arrayed in Lincoln-green doublets, the trumpeters in scarlet zouave jackets—in short, every section of the orchestra is clad in an appropriate uniform. Thus, their performance not only affords perfect relief to the ear, it appeals irresistibly to the eye as well. An especial interest, moreover, attaches to their visit, as it serves to illustrate in the most convincing way that conception of Greek "*orchêsis*" so eloquently described by Mrs. MARCELLE AZRA HINCKS in the current number of the *Nineteenth Century*, and fore-

BILGER, who owns to being fifteen, is a violoncellist of Trans-Caspian reputation, and is able to cantillate in no fewer than fourteen languages, including Lithuanian, Pomeranian, and the Romansch of the Grödnertal. HANUSCH and FRITZI BILGER (twins), aged twelve and a half, have achieved a unique position by their wonderful joint performance on the same instrument—the double-bass—which recently led Signor Boffo to eulogize them in a witty letter beginning "*A propos de Bottesini*." PARISFAL BILGER, rising eleven, is a master of the Saxophone, and passing over EUGEN PORFORA, EUDOXIA SERAPHINA, and MAX GREGOROWITCH (nine, eight, and six), who are all addicted to instruments of percussion, we may mention that the latest addition

to the family, the baby BRÜNNILDE BILGER, though as yet unable to walk, exhibits a marked preference for the music of DEBUSSY over that of all other composers. Her *début*, which is expected to take place in May, is looked forward to with the keenest apprehension.

An interesting *plébiscite* on the subject of the best diet for singers has recently been conducted by our contemporary *The Lyre*, which publishes in its current issue replies from several leading singers and musicians. Perhaps the most startling communication is that of Mr. BURNERY QUANTOCK, the famous tenor, who writes: "I never sing better than immediately after a hearty meal of boiled beef, suet dumplings, and marrowfat peas; but it is always dangerous to generalise from individual cases."

MADAME LORNA BUTLER, the impressionist soprano, recommends a light lunch of banana-fritters and lime-juice before an evening concert, and M. HUGO MORELLA advocates port wine, diluted with soda-water, and helped down by cracknels. Mr. PLUNKITT BROWN, the renowned Hibernian basso and banjoist, writes the following characteristic letter: "Though personally a follower of Dr. AMERNETHY, I do not wish to impose my views on others. But there is no doubt that golden syrup is good for the *cantabile* style, that Kümmel taken with oysters is dangerous, and that, in order to obtain perfect control of the high G, one should never ride a horse of less than sixteen hands."



RESULT OF TOMPKINS'S ATTEMPT TO CREATE AN IMPRESSION BY "VAULTING LIGHTLY INTO THE SADDLE" ACCORDING TO HIS RIDING INSTRUCTIONS.

shadows the advent of that happy time when all musical performances will rest, in their final appeal to the senses, on a correct application of the principles of Jiu-jitsu.

In no calling is hereditary talent so conspicuously displayed as in that of music, and in no family is this characteristic more signally illustrated than in that of Professor BILGER, the famous Wallachian composer, conductor, and pianist. Himself the son and grandson of distinguished musicians, he has transmitted his talent to a large and increasing family. BOLESŁAS BILGER, his eldest son, who, only three seasons back, excited the raptures of the fashionable world as the infant PADEWSKI, has now developed into a robust *virtuoso*, with so magnificent a bass voice that he is seriously thinking of taking to the operatic stage. HUNYADI

HOW TO BE AN AUTHOR.

MR. PUNCH, having read the latest book on the way to write for the Press, feels that there is at least one important subject not properly explained therein: to wit, the Covering Letter. He therefore proceeds to supplement this and similar books. . . .

... It is, however, when your story is written that the difficulties begin. Having selected a suitable editor, you send him your contribution accompanied by a covering letter. The writing of this letter is the most important part of the whole business. One story, after all, is very much like another (in your case, probably, exactly like another), but you can at least in your covering letter show that you are a person of originality.

Your letter must be one of three kinds: Pleading, Peremptory, or Corruptive. I proceed to give examples of each.

I.—THE PLEADING LETTER.

199, Berkeley Square, W.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I have a wife and seven starving children; can you possibly help us by accepting this little story of only 18,000 (eighteen thousand) words? Not only would you be doing a work of charity to one who has suffered much, but you would also, I venture to say, be conferring a real benefit upon English literature—as I have already received the thanks of no fewer than thirty-three editors for having allowed them to peruse this manuscript.—Yours humbly, THE McHARDY.

P.S.—My youngest boy, aged three, pointed to his little sister's Gazeka toy last night and cried "De editor!" These are literally the first words that have passed his lips for three days. Can you stand by and see the children starve?

II.—THE PEREMPTORY LETTER.

SIR,—Kindly publish at once and oblige

Yours faithfully, EGGENE HACKENKICK.

P.S.—I shall be round at your office to-morrow about an advertisement for some 600 lb. bar-bells, and will look you up.

III.—THE CORRUPTIVE LETTER.

Middlesex House, Park Lane, W.

DEAR MR. SMITH,—Can you come and dine with us quite in a friendly way on Thursday at eight? I want to introduce you to the Princess of HOLDWIG-SCHLOSSTEIN and Mr. ALFRED AUSTIN, who are so eager to meet you. Do you know I am really a little frightened at the thought of meeting such a famous editor? Isn't it silly of me?

Yours very sincerely, EMMA MIDDLESEX.

P.S.—I wonder if you could find room in your splendid little paper for a silly story I am sending you. It would be such a surprise for the Duke's birthday (on Monday).

E. M.

Before concluding the question of the covering letter I must mention the sad case of my friend HALLBUT. HALLBUT had a series of lithographed letters of all kinds, one of which he would enclose with every story he sent out. On a certain occasion he wrote a problem story of the most advanced kind; what, in fact, the reviewers call a "strong" story. In sending this to the editor of a famous magazine his secretary carelessly slipped in the wrong letter:

"DEAR MR. EDITOR," it ran, "I am trying to rite you a littel story, I do hope you will like my littel storey, I want to tell you about my kanary and my pussy cat, it's name is Peggy and it has seven kitens, have you any kitens, I will give you one if you print my story. Your loving little friend, FLOSSIE."

FROM the Report of a Hospital for paying patients:

"All the food for the staff comes out of the Beds. Also brushes, lamp-glasses, and numerous other sundries."

The Millennium, surely, when all things lie down with the lamb.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

MR. HALLAM MURRAY's *High Road of Empire* (JOHN MURRAY) is dedicated to the Princess of WALES, and opportunely appears at a time when H.R.H. and the PRINCE are visiting India. It is with that part of the vast Empire the handsome volume chiefly deals. The route is familiar, having often been written about. Mr. MURRAY brings to his task the rare combination of qualities found in an artist who can write. He looks upon the glowing colour of India with the eye of a painter. His story is illustrated by a number of charming sketches, many in water-colour. To those who have never passed through India they bring home a keen sense of its beauty and antiquity. Although on artistic mission bent, Mr. MURRAY was of business mind. Amid his rapture over the incomparable Taj the instinct of the publisher asserts itself. "First of all," he writes, "I had to try and verify all the *Handbook* statements and do what I could to put the descriptions straight." "The 'Ouse, what 'Ouse?" the cabman growled when the new M.P. loftily bade him drive to "The House." No need to ask what *Handbook*? It is THE *Handbook*—MURRAY'S.

Who wrote "Billy's Wife"?

"I," said LUCAS CLEEVE;

"You'd hardly believe

I could write such a silly book as Billy's Wife."

Who published "Billy's Wife"?

"I," said JOHN LONG;

"I suppose it was wrong—

but she'd already written eleven other books; and one might have expected something pretty good for the twelfth, particularly when it had such a promising title as Billy's Wife."

Who read "Billy's Wife"?

"I," groaned the reviewer

(*Temerarius puer!*);

"I read Billy's Wife."

From the house of A. & C. BLACK, which sounds black enough, comes *The Blackmore Country*, by Mr. F. J. SNELL, a volume to be carried to Devonshire by pious readers of *Lorna Doone* and *Christowell*, *Perlycross* and *The Maid of Sher*. R. D. BLACKMORE is not just now quite where he used to be in the matter of popularity, and perhaps this book may serve to revive his old vogue. We hope so, for *Lorna Doone* is still the best story of its kind. None the less, although Mr. SNELL's labours are interesting, we do not hold that a romance like that gains anything from a topographical gloss. "Read *Lorna Doone* first," would be our advice; "and afterwards—please yourself."

No flowery tale is *Hyacinth* (E. ARNOLD), and although the author's name is BIRMINGHAM, the tale is not of JOE; But those on whom *The Seething Pot* a lasting impress left Will hasten to procure it by purchase, loan or theft.

For here the Irish problem in fiction's pleasing guise With wit and sense and pathos is set before our eyes; And whether 'tis amusement or facts you want to get You'll find them both in *Hyacinth* for four-and-sixpence net.

SUGGESTED NAME FOR THE FREE BREAKFAST FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN BILL.—The Alimentary Education Act.

Q. Why has Mr. TREE recently dispensed with his body servant?

A. Because no man is a Nero to his valet.